

# GEORGIA

# DHAPP

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE HIV/AIDS  
PREVENTION PROGRAM

REDUCING THE INCIDENCE OF HIV/AIDS  
AMONG UNIFORMED PERSONNEL IN  
SELECTED AFRICAN NATIONS AND  
BEYOND

## **WINNING BATTLES IN THE WAR AGAINST HIV/AIDS**

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **Country Statistics**

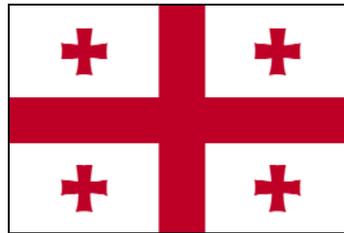
The estimated population of Georgia is 4.6 million people, with an average life expectancy of 77 years. Georgian is the official language of Georgia, which has an estimated literacy rate of 100%. Georgia's main economic activities include the cultivation of agricultural products such as grapes, citrus fruits, and hazelnuts; mining of manganese and copper; and output of a small industrial sector producing alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages, metals, machinery, and chemicals. Despite the severe damage the economy has suffered due to civil strife, Georgia, with the help of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, has made substantial economic gains since 2000, achieving positive gross domestic product (GDP) growth and curtailing inflation. The GDP per capita is \$4,200, with 31% of Georgian people living below the poverty level. Georgia's economy has sustained robust GDP growth of close to 10% in 2006 and 12% in 2007, based on strong inflows of foreign investment and robust government spending. However, a widening trade deficit and higher inflation are emerging risks to the economy.

#### **HIV/AIDS Statistics**

The HIV prevalence rate in Georgia's general population is estimated at 0.2%, with approximately 5,600 individuals living with HIV/AIDS. The main route of HIV transmission is thought to be intravenous drug use. Men are more severely affected than women. Vulnerable groups include intravenous drug users, migrant populations, and commercial sex workers and their clients.

### **Military Statistics**

The Georgian Armed Forces (GAF) consists of approximately 27,000 active-duty members. Georgia allocates 0.6% of the GDP for military purposes. Military HIV prevalence rates are unknown. A partner in the global war on terror, Georgia has sent troops to Iraq.



### PROGRAM RESPONSE

#### **In-Country Ongoing Assistance**

The GAF HIV prevention program works in conjunction with the Office of Defense Cooperation at the US Embassy and the Georgian Medical Group, a local nongovernmental organization. The overall goal of the program is to enhance knowledge of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among Georgian troops.



## OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

### **Prevention**

Prevention education was done through a series of trainings for 500 troops. The 20 trainings occurred at the Krtsanisi National Training Center and the Vaziani Military Base and covered HIV and STI prevention. The trainings covered various routes of transmission including drug injection. Through collaborations with John Snow International, the GAF was able to distribute condoms to the participants. HIV rapid test kits and some laboratory equipment were procured and will be available to troops for voluntary testing in the near future.



### **Proposed Future Activities**

DHAPP received a proposal from the Georgian Medical Group on behalf of the GAF for FY08. The main objectives of the proposal were to train military staff on HIV/AIDS and STIs prevention so that a larger number of troops could be reached with prevention messages by peer educators, and to procure HIV laboratory equipment and rapid test kits as to provide CT services.